

Performance and Resources Scrutiny Programme 2019

Report to: the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex

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| Chief Officer | T/ACC Wells |
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| Author on behalf of Chief Officer: | T/C/Insp 2696 Sharn Taylor |
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1.0 Purpose of Report

To provide an overview of the current position with TruCam, including implications of growth on back office and the court systems.

2.0 Recommendations

The board is asked to note that whilst TruCam is proving to be an excellent piece of equipment any further roll out will need to be supported by a growth in back office support.

3.0 Executive Summary

The roll out of TruCam to non-Roads Policing officers, partner agencies, and volunteers has seen an increase in the number of prosecutions for speeding.

Over the last six months just over 7,000 prosecutions have taken place, which directly contributes to improving safety on our roads.

Whilst this is positive in relation to road safety this increase is causing a significant issue within the Process Support Unit.

4.0 **Introduction/Background**

In April 2019 a paper was presented to the board detailing the Forces current position on the deployment of TruCam across Essex.

This paper outlined the journey for TruCam since the initial roll out in 2014, as well as the level of use over the preceding 12 months. The paper showed that the expansion of TruCam was applying pressure to the Process Support Unit at Billericay.

A further report was requested to be submitted back to the board in 6 months' time with further information detailing the pressures this is having on back office function including processing, court systems and Staff/Officer time.

An update was also requested on the trial of the Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP) Volunteers in Harwich.

5.0 **Current Work and Performance**

In the last 6 months TruCam has been used on 429 occasions resulting in 8,406 excess speed offences of which 7,067 have resulted in a prosecution (84%).

Note; not all speed offences result in prosecutions and some may be subject to no further action. Reasons can include camera error or the user not activating the device correctly. Ongoing training by the Road Crime Team ensures that any common errors are addressed and further guidance is issued.

Upon the Chief Constable designating additional powers, Maldon District Council Community Protection Officers were the first outside of Essex Police to be trained for TruCam. SERP funded a device for their use and all associated training. The pilot has proved so successful that they are looking to purchase their own second device. In the last 6 months Maldon Council have recorded the following activity:

| Trained in TruCam | Deployments | Excess speed offences | Prosecutions |
|-------------------|-------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| 10 | 220 | 866 | 537 |

The panel will note above the difference in excess speed offences converted into prosecutions. This unusually low figure was as a result of a training need identified with one of the operators which has now been addressed.

Tendring PCSO's were the next area to deploy TruCam outside of Roads Policing. The device used by Tendring PCSO's was funded from the OPFCC. They commenced deployments in May 2018. In the last 6 month's they have recorded:

| Trained in TruCam | Deployments | Excess speed offences | Prosecutions |
|-------------------|-------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| 8 | 49 | 871 | 701 |

Uttlesford and Braintree Community Policing Team (PC's and PCSO's) trained in TruCam in October 2018. SERP hold a pool of devices and one of these is now used by the CPT. Since their initial training other competing demands have hindered the regular use of the device. A review is being undertaken to see if there is still a requirement for the device to be in Uttlesford or if it should be reallocated to another District. This review will be completed by November 2019. In the last 6 months they have recorded:

| Trained in TruCam | Deployments | Excess speed offences | Prosecutions |
|-------------------|-------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| 6 | 13 | 334 | 324 |

On the 31st July 2019 the Safer Essex Roads Partnership Volunteers went live in Harwich with a 12 month trial. To date they have recorded:

| Trained in TruCam | Deployments | Excess speed offences | Prosecutions |
|-------------------|-------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| 5 | 30 | 181 | 109 |

The use of volunteers has received attention from a number of forces across the country who are now looking at replicating this set up.

6.0 **Implications (Issues)**

The Process Support Unit at Billericay is responsible for the back office support, including the preparation of prosecutions, for all Ticket Offence Reports (TORs) that are issued from our proactive work around the County.

To ensure that we prioritise the work where public interaction takes place the staff work on the below list in order of priority:

1. Officer issued tickets
2. TruCam Enforcement
3. Fixed site safety camera offences

The Process Support Unit has the capacity to process between 8,500 - 10,500 first Notice of Intended Prosecutions (NIPs) a month from a combination of TruCam and fixed safety camera infrastructure.

Over the past 6 months TruCam deployments, outside of Roads Policing, generated 278 prosecutions a month.

Any future increase in the deployment of TruCam will require close evaluation prior to any changes and would likely need additional back office support to oversee the processing of the offences and subsequent prosecutions.

In the last few years the number of officer issued tickets has increased due to the proactive work completed by the Road Crime Team funded through SERP. This has had a knock on effect to the Safety Camera work as the number of staff processing the offences has not increased. As more time is spent processing the TOR's this leaves less time to process the camera offences. It must be noted that cameras are

located at KSI sites so this must be managed carefully to ensure we meet the objective of Improving Safety on our Roads by targeting key areas.

Although some efficiencies have been realised with the introduction of the online TOR on the mobile device, this has not been anywhere near sufficient to cover the increased workload.

The process involved in dealing with a TOR does not stop with the inputting of the initial ticket. There are several processes that need to be adhered to from ensuring that the returned NIP is opened and scanned into the system for evidential continuity, through to preparing the case for court should it be required.

In the 2018 calendar year the Process Support Unit sent out 112,240 first NIPs. These resulted in the below disposals:

- Conditional Offer - 10.94%
- Education Course - 60.35%
- Prosecution (Court) - 10.27%
- No Further Action - 18.44%

Out of the Conditional Offers and Education Courses offered, 90% complied with their notice with 7% reverting to the court process and 3% having no further action taken.

With the introduction of the SERP Volunteers completing TruCam enforcement, this will in time create further work for the Process Support Unit with the additional court files which will be completed on behalf of the volunteers.

The Harwich trial is in its infancy having only been operational for 2 months, but during this time the team have deployed on 30 occasions detecting 181 offences. If we use the above figures as a guide this is a further 9 court files a month that will need to be produced by the process support unit or over 100 a year.

6.1 Links to Police and Crime Plan Priorities

The deployment of TruCam contributes to the priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan, namely:

- More local, accessible and visible policing
- Crack down on anti-social behaviour
- Improve safety on our roads

Drivers who commit speeding offences can be considered anti-social and clearly are a danger to other road users. Excess speed is a contributory factor in many serious injury/fatal collisions. TruCam deployments by Community Policing Teams, Local Authority representatives and authorised community groups increases visibility across the County and provides reassurance to law abiding citizens who report concerns in their local area.

6.2 Demand

Not applicable to this report.

6.3 Risks/Mitigation

No risks identified at this time.

6.4 Equality and/or Human Rights Implications

No identified impact on equality, diversity or human rights.

6.5 Health and Safety Implications

Deployments are subject to risk assessments being carried out. As stated earlier in the report, a further risk assessment has been produced for the Harwich SERP volunteers.

7.0 Consultation/Engagement

Relevant parties within the Safer Essex Roads Partnership have been consulted on the use of TruCam.

8.0 Actions for Improvement

No actions identified.

9.0 Future Work/Development and Expected Outcome

TruCam is proving to be an effective measure which is popular both internally and with our partners, including the voluntary sector.

It is the intention to expand the use of TruCam further with Brentwood Council Community Protection Officers having recently completed the 3 day RSS course. SERP have confirmed that they will fund a device for their use.

Due to the success of TruCam it is important that any additional expansion of its use is considered against the capacity of the Process Support Unit to carry out prosecutions.

There is a business case being prepared for the part funding of a Community Speed Watch administrative post that would be capable of picking up some of this additional demand.